



**STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED**

**Demolition of a Designated Heritage Property Within the Union Station Heritage Conservation District and Approval of Alterations and New Construction – 151 Front Street West, 20 York Street, 7, 7A & 7B Station Street and the Skywalk**

<b>Date:</b>	June 26, 2014
<b>To:</b>	Toronto Preservation Board Toronto East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Urban Design, City Planning Division
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 20, Trinity-Spadina
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2014\Cluster B\PLN\TEYCC\TE14097

**SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council endorse the conservation strategy generally described in this report for the heritage properties located at 7, 7A & 7B Station Street (including the Skywalk), minor alterations to the designated properties at 151 Front Street and 20 York Street and the associated new development proposal within the Union Station Heritage Conservation District (USHCD).

The development proposal by Sweeney Sterling Finlayson & Co. Architects Inc. and Allied Properties REIT consists of a 48-storey tower comprising offices, retail uses, and six levels of underground parking. The office tower would be built over the westerly section of Station Street and lands to the south of Station Street, an area now known municipally as 171 Front Street West. A two level public plaza would also be constructed over Station Street on the east end of the site.

Should Council endorse this strategy staff recommend that the owner document the heritage resources prior to demolition, provide a Conservation Plan for exterior restoration on the remaining designated buildings and implement an Interpretation Plan for the site.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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### The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council approve the proposed demolition of the heritage property known as the Skywalk as well as the heritage property identified by the addresses 7, 7A & 7B Station Street, approve the alteration of 151 Front Street and 20 York Street and approve the associated new development proposal for a 48-storey tower comprising offices, retail uses within the Union Station Heritage Conservation District (USHCD) substantially in accordance with the Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by GBCA, dated June 13, 2014 and the plans by Sweeny & Co Architects Inc. contained with the HIA, all in accordance with Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act, and on file with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services and subject to the following conditions:
  - a. That the related Zoning By-law Amendment giving rise to the proposed alterations have been enacted by the City Council and have come into full force and effect in a form and with content acceptable to the City Council, as determined by the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning in consultation with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
  - b. That prior to Site Plan Approval for the property at 171 Front Street, 151 Front Street, 7 Station Street and 20 York Street, the applicant shall:
    - i. Provide a detailed Conservation Plan prepared by a qualified heritage consultant for the restoration of the heritage buildings located at 20 York Street, and 151 Front Street, satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services substantially in accordance with the Heritage Impact Statement, dated June 13, 2014 prepared by Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd. Architects.
    - ii. Complete all heritage-related pre-approval conditions contained in a Notice of Approval Conditions for Site Plan Control to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
    - iii. Provide Final Site Plan drawings including drawings related to the approved Conservation Plan and the Landscape Plan to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
  - c. That prior to the release of any heritage permit related to the demolition of the Skywalk and 7, 7A & 7b Station Street or the alteration of 151 Front Street and 20 York Street, including a heritage permit or a building permit, but

excluding permits for repairs and maintenance of the existing heritage building the owner shall:

- i. Provide as-built drawings and photographs to fully document both designated properties (the Skywalk and 7 Station Street) to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
  - ii. Obtain final approval for the necessary by-law amendment required for the demolition and alteration of the properties, such amendments to have been enacted by City Council and to have come into full force and effect in a form and with content acceptable to City Council as determined by the Chief Planner, and Executive Director, City Planning in consultation with the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.
  - iii. Have obtained Final Site Plan approval for such property, issued by the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning.
  - iv. Provide plans for interpretive panels or other interpretive materials to communicate the development history of the property: the research, design, and location of the interpretive materials will be to the satisfaction of the Manager of Heritage Preservation Services.
  - v. Provide a Letter of Credit, including provision for upwards indexing, in a form and amount and from a bank satisfactory to the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services to secure all work included in the approved Conservation Plan and interpretive materials.
- d. That prior to the release of the Letter of Credit, the applicant shall provide a letter of substantial completion prepared and signed by a qualified heritage consultant confirming that the conservation work and the interpretive work have been completed in accordance with the approved Conservation Plan and the approved Interpretation Plan, and that an appropriate standard of conservation has been maintained, all to the satisfaction of the Manager, Heritage Preservation Services.

### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

The properties at 151 Front Street, 20 York, 7, 7A & 7B Station Street and the Skywalk are part of the Union Station Heritage Conservation District designated by City Council under By-law 634-2006 on July 27, 2006.

In 2007, City Council adopted the recommendations contained within a Final Report from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District, which

recommended approval of an application to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-law for a 36-storey office tower and technology centre at 151 Front Street West, 7 Station Street, and 20 York Street (File No. 05 105725 STE 20 SA). As a result, By-law 594-2007 and By-law 595-2007 were adopted.

A September 24, 2007 staff report entitled "151 Front Street, 20 York Street, 7 Station Street in the Union Station Heritage Conservation District, Requesting Approval of Alterations" was considered and approved by City Council as a part of the Zoning By-law Amendment that recommended approval of a development proposal that would demolish the western portion of the Skywalk and leave the eastern portion intact.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

### **Policy Framework**

#### **Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement 2014**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land. Key objectives include: building strong communities; wise use and management of resources; and, protecting public health and safety. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS.

The Planning Act and the associated Provincial Policy Statement guide development in the Province and they include provincial interests regarding heritage resources as described in the Provincial Policy Statement issued under the authority of Section 3 of the Planning Act. The Planning Act requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters "shall be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement. The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and promotes the provincial policy-led planning system.

Provincial Policy Statement 2.6.1 directs that "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved." Properties included on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties are considered to be significant in this context. In the PPS 2014, "conserved" is defined as "the identification, protection, use and/or management of built heritage resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained under the Ontario Heritage Act."

#### **Official Plan**

Policy 3.1.5.2 of the Official Plan states that "Heritage resources on properties listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties will be conserved." The policy also states that "Development adjacent to properties on the City's Inventory will respect the scale, character and form of the heritage buildings and landscapes."

At its meeting of April 3, and 4, 2013, Toronto City Council adopted amendments to the Official Plan heritage policies. By-law 468-2013 enacting these policies has been appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. While the amendments are not yet in force,

Heritage Preservation Services (HPS) has also considered the proposal within the context of these amended policies. Policy 28 specifically addresses the relocation of heritage buildings and/or structures.

### **The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**

In 2008 Toronto City Council adopted the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada as the official document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City of Toronto.

### **Union Station Master Plan**

The Union Station Master Plan was approved by City Council in December 2004. The Master Plan put forth guiding principles and a policy framework that encourages and ensures that the Station complex contributes to a thriving downtown, a dynamic Waterfront and the vitality of the entire region. The Master Plan was an important city building tool that outlined the key initiatives, structured principles and guiding objectives that will ensure the vitality of the Station. The Master Plan sets out a strong and clear framework that protects transportation uses and public interests while allowing for visionary interventions.

The Urban Design Plan guides the location and details relating to connections to roads, sidewalks, transit facilities, open spaces, treatment of sidewalks and roads, pedestrian and bicycle routes, linkages to other precincts, and provisions for public art and cultural facilities and it led to design guidelines that address setbacks, build-to lines, building heights and envelopes, the nature of interior and exterior open spaces, weather protection, parking, entrances, pedestrian routes and streetscapes.

Proposed treatments to the public realm are expected to be coordinated physically and visually to connect with adjacent precincts and key public buildings and destinations to heighten the civic prominence of Union Station as a landmark, gateway and as a link to the downtown and the Waterfront.

### **Union Station Heritage Conservation District Plan (USHCD Plan)**

The Union Station Heritage Conservation District (USHCD) was approved by City Council July 27, 2006 as By-Law 634-2006 (Attachment No. 2).

The USHCD study was a component of the broader Union Station District Urban Design Study, which was initiated by the City Planning Division as a part of the Union Station Master Plan. The resulting USHCD Plan includes an examination of heritage character, provides district guidelines and identifies those properties that contribute to the heritage value of the Plan area. It is used by the City and property owners as a tool to strengthen and protect the significant heritage character of the Union Station Precinct.

### **Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada**

On March 3, 4 and 5, 2008, Council adopted Parks Canada's *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (Standards and Guidelines)* as the

document guiding planning, stewardship and conservation approach for all listed and designated heritage resources within the City.

## **Development Proposal**

The development proposal by Sweeney Sterling Finlayson & Co. Architects Inc. and Allied Properties REIT consists of a 48-storey tower comprising offices, retail uses, and six levels of underground parking. The office tower would be built over the westerly section of Station Street and land to the south of Station Street on a property known municipally as 171 Front Street West. A two level public plaza would be constructed over Station Street on the east end of the site. Vehicles will be able to access Station Street and the loading and parking facilities for the new office tower and the existing Citibank building at 123 Front Street West from Simcoe Street, and there will be limited access to Station Street (via a gate) from York Street.

This proposal requires the demolition of 7, 7A & 7B Station Street (including the Skywalk) and minor alterations to the designated properties at 151 Front Street and 20 York Street. The route of the Skywalk will remain the same, but its shape and proportions will be altered to accommodate increased pedestrian usage when the union Pearson Express is complete.

## **Conservation Strategy**

The subject property includes a number of interrelated resources including the former Station Street loading facility that is associated with both the CN Express Building (20 York Street) and the Skywalk, which was constructed above the remaining ground floor façade of the property identified as 7, 7A & 7B Station Street.

The former Canadian National Express shed north wall, running west from 20 York Street, will be removed as a part of the development. A small portion, exposed at the south side of the new stairs from York Street to the new plaza over Station Street, will be preserved as a part of the urban stairway. Exterior conservation work at 20 York Street includes minor repairs to the limestone masonry at the east end of the block at the corner of Station Street and York Street. This will consist of re-pointing using specially designed lime-based restoration mortar to ensure a match with the colour and performance properties of the original mortar. The work will also include repairs to salt-damaged damaged stones near the base of the wall by means of proprietary mortars and/or stone indents.

The 151 Front Street facades will be preserved unchanged. However, the south facade fronting on Station Street will be obscured by the proposed new tower. The characteristic red brick masonry will be re-pointed and repaired as required to meet normal maintenance requirements.

Alteration of the Skywalk will include changes to its roof shape and proportions to properly establish the structure as a major entry point to Toronto (the Union Pearson

Express rail link entrance point). The route of the Skywalk will be retained with the current proposal.

The existing roof over the Skywalk will be replaced with a more environmentally appropriate roof and a new glazed front (north) wall. The Skywalk connection will pass through the lobby of the proposed office tower.

## **COMMENTS**

Heritage Preservation Services is responsible for reviewing all proposed alterations to listed and designated properties to assess the impact on the heritage character of the property or area. Should the current application receive approval under Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act and for the associated Zoning Bylaw Amendment, it will also require Site Plan Approval.

The subject proposal includes four properties designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act as part of the Union Station Heritage Conservation District. Three of those properties are identified as “contributing” in the USHCD Plan and one of them, the Skywalk, is proposed for demolition. The demolition of “contributing” buildings is beyond staff delegated authority and therefore requires the approval of Council.

## **7, 7A & 7B Station Street**

Retention of the minimal original remaining fabric of the north façade of the Station Street property would impose significant limitations on incorporating the ground level and its removal supports the 2004 Union Station Master Plan objective of enhancing the public realm. The designated property at 7 Station Street is not specifically described in the USHCD and the USHCD Plan acknowledges that “non-contributing” buildings can be demolished.

Interpretation material displayed in the York Teamway should be created and installed to communicate the significance of the Station Street component of the Canadian National Express building (identified separately and included on the Inventory as a Part V designated property under the municipal addresses of 7, 7A & 7B Station Street).

## **Skywalk**

Station Street currently serves as a combined service street for buildings on its north and south sides as well as for parking on the south. Intensive use of the street is made by commuters who exit Union Station via the north doors of 20 York and, via the stair towers, from the Skywalk level. The resulting conflict between service traffic and pedestrians is exacerbated in inclement weather by poor drainage on the street, snow, and frequent construction works. The situation will be made worse by the opening of the UP Express station which will add additional pedestrians to the street.

The strength of the 1989 design of the Skywalk was in creating a bright open connection within a structure that was aesthetically interesting while establishing a sense of

enclosure. The Skywalk provided both a sculptural exterior form and sufficient interest to enhance an otherwise banal walkway. The exterior expression is modest and relatively featureless. Although the Heritage Impact Statement and project description suggest that the Skywalk embodies merely a route, it is a designated structure and its demolition required careful consideration.

The Skywalk was developed as an elevated urban connection and represented an enhanced interior circulation linking Union Station with the Skydome (now Rogers Centre). The only realistic opportunity to incorporate original built form from that original construction would be in the segment that has been integrated within the Zeidler design of the new Union Pearson Rail Link (UP Express). The current proposal supersedes the original intent of the structure, and the interim Zeidler design, and develops a more complete urban public realm.

The proposal will also see the decking of Station Street so that access to the exterior from the level of the UP platform will be convenient and remove the need for pedestrians to descend immediately to street level. Commuters will be directed to the east or west end of the original Station Street via the Skywalk and through the lobby of the new tower. This will represent a considerable improvement in the quality of this precinct both in terms of public safety and in terms of its urban presence.

### **Proposed Development**

The subject proposal adds a substantial office tower development to the downtown and provides enhanced interior and exterior public spaces as part of the associated infrastructure.

### **CONCLUSION**

The proposed design of this proposal represents a major implementation in the spirit of the 2004 Union Station Master Plan. While the Skywalk has been an identifiable feature within this part of the USHCD since its construction in 1989, its original design as an internal connection makes it obsolete as a part of an enhanced and expanding urban public realm. Likewise the compromised designated property along Station Street (the original Canadian National Express shed) should be further documented and interpreted, but its retention would significantly compromise the potential for a vibrant and functional design solution.



Staff therefore recommends that City Council approve the proposed demolition of the Skywalk and the remaining fabric of the designated properties of 7, 7A & 7B Station Street and approve the proposed development proposal with conditions.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Harold Madi  
Director Urban Design  
City Planning Division

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment No. 1 – Location Map
- Attachment No. 2 – USHCD Boundaries
- Attachment No. 3 – Project Rendering
- Attachment No. 4 – Project Rendering
- Attachment No. 5 – Project Rendering
- Attachment No. 6 – Project Plans
- Attachment No. 7 – Project Plans
- Attachment No. 8 – Project Section
- Attachment No. 9 – Demolition Plans
- Attachment No. 10 – Demolition Plans
- Attachment No. 11 – USHCD Designation Description – 151 Front Street West
- Attachment No. 12 – USHCD Designation Description – 20 York Street
- Attachment No. 13 – USHCD Designation Description – Skywalk
- Attachment No. 14 – Context Photos – 151 Front Street West
- Attachment No. 15 – Context Photos – 20 York Street
- Attachment No. 16 – Context Photos – 7, 7A & 7B Station Street
- Attachment No. 17 – Context Photos – 7, 7A & 7B Station Street
- Attachment No. 18 – Context Photos – Skywalk
- Attachment No. 19 – Union Pearson Express Rendering (Zeidler Partnership Architects)